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South-South cooperation for development

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Further mainstreaming and coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report calls attention to the initiatives of the United Nations development system in response to the growing demands by Member States for greater United Nations support for South-South and triangular cooperation. It elaborates on the recent actions taken towards further mainstreaming and coordination of United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation across the United Nations system. As requested by the Member States, it also highlights the specific measures taken by the United Nations Development Programme to those ends.

The report, which responds to General Assembly resolution 69/239, concludes with a number of recommendations to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and to maximize the contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation towards the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, once it is adopted. The report also reiterates the recommendation contained in SSC/18/3 that the United Nations Development Programme "continue to serve as institutional host to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation".

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 69/239. The report examines the growing demand for United Nations support in a landscape marked by growing South-South exchanges and flows. It captures the response of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as evidenced by their measures to mainstream South-South cooperation in their policy and programmatic work. It then highlights the actions taken to improve the coherence and coordination of United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation and proposes a range of additional measures to strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. As requested, it also highlights the specific measures taken by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to those ends. The report builds on earlier recommendations contained in the reports of the Secretary-General on the measures to further strengthen the Office (SSC/18/3) and on the state of South-South cooperation in 2014 (A/69/153).

2. Trade, investment, finance, technology and development cooperation links across the South are growing fast. While world trade has grown almost fourfold since 1990, South-South trade has grown more than tenfold. China, India and Brazil are increasingly significant partners for Africa. In 2011, China accounted for 17 per cent of total African imports, up from 5 per cent in 2000. India and Brazil increased their shares in total African trade from 2.3 per cent and 1.7 per cent, respectively, in 2000 to 7 per cent and 3 per cent in 2011.[1]

3. Flows of development assistance between developing countries were estimated to be in the range of $16.1 billion to $19 billion in 2011.[2] South-South remittances have also increased and now account for 34 per cent of global remittance flows.[3] Furthermore, increased connectivity within and among developing countries is ushering in a new dynamism and fostering opportunities for expanded South-South cooperation. Beyond the socioeconomic benefits within and across regions, South-South cooperation has also gained importance in the global political and economic spheres. Organizations such as the Group of 20 provide major economies of the South with a greater voice and a more important role in global economic governance forums.

4. Middle-income countries are playing an important role in the support that they offer to other developing countries. Some have long track records in South-South cooperation, while others have engaged recently.

5. The scale, diversity, dynamism and wide scope of South-South and triangular cooperation is striking, often involving innovative or hybrid initiatives that do not fit neatly within traditional development cooperation categories, and therefore having a number of implications. First, there is a growing need for access to better information on partners, demand and supply, and sectoral and subsectoral distribution, as well as geographical coverage and financial, in-kind and other types of flows and outcomes. Secondly, the evolving and diverse nature of South-South

[1] OECD, *Perspectives on global development 2013*, pp. 21-23. See the report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation (A/68/212) for more details on recent trends in South-South relations.

[2] Report of the Secretary-General on trends and progress in international development cooperation (E/2014/77).

[3] The World Bank, *Migration and Remittances: Recent Developments and Outlook*, 2015.

and triangular cooperation underlines the importance of better-informed and intense dialogue among participants to understand what is unfolding and to expand its potential, while also addressing possible weaknesses or bottlenecks. Thirdly, while South-South cooperation has brought new dynamism and hope to countries of the South, their ability to maximize gains — whether by offering or by receiving assistance so as to be able to advance national development priorities — is partly stymied by asymmetries in their capacity at the national level to identify, engage with, manage and monitor cooperation, including through key focal-point institutions in Governments. There is untapped potential for South-South and triangular cooperation. Such potential can be unlocked by considering policy, regulatory and legal reforms that can accelerate the sharing of expertise, technology and services between countries bilaterally, through "neighbourhood" initiatives, and between and across regions.

II. Increasing demand on the United Nations to support South-South cooperation

6. There is growing awareness of the significance of South-South approaches to development at the intergovernmental level. In various intergovernmental forums, such as the 2009 High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, during the seventeenth and eighteenth sessions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, and in recent quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolutions, Member States have stressed their commitment to the South-South cooperation agenda, while calling for intensified and increased multilateral support for such cooperation. In particular, Member States have called for increased mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation in the policies and programmes of United Nations operational work; the provision of coordinated United Nations support to South-South initiatives; the provision of support to capacity development through the sharing of Southern knowledge and experience; the creation of new partnerships, including innovative public-private partnerships and South-South and triangular cooperation arrangements; the provision of adequate human, technical and financial support; and the undertaking of data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation with respect to the quality and impact of South-South and triangular cooperation.

7. Nearly 80 per cent of the resident coordinators who responded to a survey conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2014 indicated that they had received requests from programme country Governments to support cooperation with other developing countries. Of particular interest to developing countries is assistance enabling them to gain more access to the knowledge and expertise of other countries of the South and to identify potential Southern development partners. Those needs are most pronounced in areas such as industry, trade and investment, knowledge and technology transfer, economic growth and employment, environment and natural resources management.[4]

[4] Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/70/62-E/2015/4).

III. Responsive United Nations development system

8. A growing number of United Nations organizations and agencies are mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation in their policies, strategic frameworks, operational activities and budgets, as elaborated in the 2014 report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation (A/69/153). The focus of their support is directed at policy development and dialogue, knowledge-sharing, research and analysis, capacity development, partnership-building to scale up South-South cooperation in their respective areas of competence, and innovative financing, as well as monitoring and evaluation. The five regional commissions also provide support at the subregional and regional levels, where South-South cooperation is instrumental in the provisioning of regional public goods and services.

9. Twenty of the 22 entities that responded to the aforementioned survey stated that South-South cooperation had been integrated into their respective strategic plans and frameworks, while 11 indicated that some form of support had been provided to the projects managed and supported by the Office, the majority being specialized agencies. Eighteen entities reported on South-South cooperation in their annual reports. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) reported on evaluations and assessments of South-South cooperation, which informed their institutional policies and strategies (A/69/153). Several agencies have adopted strategies on South-South cooperation, such as ILO in 2012 and the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2015. Others are in the process of developing strategies, such as UNDP, or piloting funding mechanisms for South-South partnerships, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). According to its 2015 annual report, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) increased the generation and sharing of good practices from 185 in 2013 to 220 in 2014. UNFPA also reports on the scaling-up of the use of South-South cooperation, with 74 per cent of programme countries using this modality to strengthen programme performance. The strategy has been identified as a corporate priority, starting in 2015.[5]

10. Responses by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to a survey conducted by the Office in 2014 indicate that many agencies are mainstreaming support to South-South cooperation in their policies and operational programmes, in keeping with the framework of guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3). FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and WIPO reported providing support to measures that contribute to the shaping of national, regional or international policies and strategies for South-South cooperation.

11. FAO promotes a continuing dialogue process aimed at ending hunger, improving food security and advancing the sustainable use of new technologies. ILO promotes the decent work agenda through South-South policy dialogue. The work of UNEP reflects the growing significance of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in sustainable development, in accordance with its medium-term strategy for the period 2014-2017. In 2014, for example, UNEP signed an

[5] DP/FPA/2015/5 (Part I).

agreement with the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission concerning the enhancement of collaboration on South-South cooperation in addressing climate change. South-South cooperation was adopted as one of seven programme implementation strategies in the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) strategic plan 2014-2017. WIPO, in cooperation with the Government of Brazil, convened the first interregional meeting on South-South cooperation with respect to the governance of intellectual property.

12. The emergence of the South and the related surge in South-South cooperation have spurred research into and analysis of various trends by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNDP and other entities. In the 2013 edition of its *Trade and Development Report*, UNCTAD made the case that South-South trade has a major role in resetting unsustainable patterns of global production and consumption, while, in the global Human Development Report issued in 2013, UNDP documented the rise of the South and the contribution of South-South cooperation.

13. South-South knowledge-sharing is another area that is receiving support from United Nations common system organizations and agencies, such as ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, the World Bank and the World Tourism Organization. Since 2010, the World Tourism Organization has collaborated with the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa on a programme to develop and strengthen the national system of tourism statistics for the 14 member States of the latter organization. The South-South Experience Exchange Facility of the World Bank funds knowledge-sharing initiatives among low-income countries. UNICEF has supported cross-country sharing of knowledge of and experience in Ebola monitoring and response between affected and unaffected countries in West Africa. This work extends to include Uganda and Cuba, in addition to a number of cross-country and regional exchanges between government agencies and civil society organizations with respect to the campaign to End Violence against Children.

14. Numerous initiatives supported by FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP and other members of the United Nations development system focus on building the institutional capacity of developing countries to strengthen national and collective self-reliance in the global South. The Centre for South-South Cooperation in Malaysia, which is sponsored by UNESCO, focuses on capacity-building in developing countries in three interrelated critical areas: the discovery of new knowledge (science), its application (technology) and its uses (innovation). A partnership between WFP and the Government of Brazil led to the establishment in 2011 of the WFP Brazil Centre of Excellence against Hunger. Its purpose is to strengthen national capacities and knowledge in Africa, Asia and Latin America to design and implement nationally owned, sustainable school-feeding and other anti-hunger programmes, one of various social policy initiatives.

15. As the United Nations ramps up its response to those demands, it is worth noting that South-South cooperation covers multiple sectors and geographical areas. United Nations organizations and agencies must be judicious in deciding where their individual and collective actions are likely to have a transformative impact. This will require a better integration of strategies, policies and actions in support of sustainable development goals.

A. Actions taken by the Administrator of UNDP as Chair of the United Nations Development Group

16. In its decision 18/1, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation echoed key recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report on the measures to further strengthen the Office and requested the Administrator of UNDP, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), to (a) establish a more formalized and strengthened inter-agency mechanism coordinated by the Office; (b) give the Office the opportunity to be represented more regularly in the strategic and coordination mechanisms of UNDG when matters affecting South-South and triangular cooperation are discussed; and (c) take steps to ensure that the Office is adequately staffed, as appropriate, through the secondment of personnel from Governments and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and through the recruitment of Junior Professional Officers to give additional weight to the system-wide coordination function of the Office.

17. In her capacity as Chair of UNDG, the Administrator of UNDP has acted on various aspects of the aforementioned decision. More specifically, the following actions have been taken to date. Additional measures have also been detailed elsewhere in the present report.

18. The Chair of UNDG established a task team on South-South and triangular cooperation, co-chaired by the Office and ILO, as part of the new coordination mechanisms launched early in 2015. This action aims to foster the application of South-South and triangular cooperation to United Nations operational activities in various sectors at the country and regional levels. To that end, the UNDG Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which is open to over 30 United Nations organizations and agencies, is embedded within the UNDG Sustainable Development Working Group, whose mandate is to support Member States to achieve the integration of sustainable development goals into their national development plans and actions. The Task Team draws its members from a number of United Nations agencies. The Office has led the preparation of its terms of reference.

19. As co-Chair of the Task Team, the Office is able to draw on the human, financial and other capacities of the United Nations system, as appropriate. For example, it has led the preparation of an inter-agency workplan through which many United Nations organizations and agencies are collaborating over the forthcoming biennium in areas such as food security, climate change, HIV/AIDS and decent work. The Task Team is also drawing up joint plans to map ongoing South-South initiatives to identify good practices that will be brought to the attention of United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) roll-out countries. The inter-agency workplan also commits the Office to leading collaborative efforts in which the existing framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South cooperation is revised in line with the post-2015 development agenda. The Task Team has been invited to contribute to the formulation of UNDG guidance notes that will inform the integration of the sustainable development goals into national development plans and programmes. In so doing, the Task Team will have an opportunity to apprise developing countries of the complementarity of South-South and North-South cooperation in efforts to attain the sustainable development goals over the coming years.

20. The Office has an unprecedented opportunity to promote and deepen inter-agency collaboration for the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into United Nations operational activities for development at all levels. The Office has begun attending the UNDG meetings where South-South cooperation is discussed. Hence, it should also be able to influence the work of various stakeholders in government, the civil society, academia and the private sector through its improved access to the wide range of expertise and networks that its UNDG partners possess and can bring to bear in addressing the needs of Member States for South-South cooperation in such areas as trade and investment, industry, economic growth and employment and the management of natural resources.

21. The Director of the Office has participated in regular meetings of the UNDG Sustainable Development Working Group, in keeping with the recommendations of the Secretary-General and in accordance with decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. The inter-agency meetings that the Office organizes for the Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation attract participants from various agencies in New York, as well as those in Geneva, Nairobi, Rome and Vienna, via teleconferencing.

22. As part of the effort to increase the staff capacity of the Office, steps have already been taken to recruit Junior Professional Officers, as proposed in the report of the Secretary-General on measures to further strengthen the Office and reiterated in decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and in General Assembly resolution 69/239. The idea is that Junior Professional Officers, including recruits from the South, will support both the regional offices and the office at Headquarters to advance the concept and practice of South-South cooperation to achieve internationally agreed development goals. To that end, the Office will continue to work closely with the Junior Professional Officer Service Centre in Copenhagen.

23. In addition, the Chair of UNDG will take steps to advocate for arrangements regarding inter-agency staff mobility between the Office and the United Nations development system on a trial basis, including non-reimbursable loan agreements in accordance with applicable rules and procedures. The Chair of UNDG will also reach out to Member States for secondments to the Office.

24. In the light of the responses of the resident coordinators to the survey conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Chair of UNDG will, with the concurrence and support of the Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, take the necessary steps to include South-South cooperation as one of the means of implementing the sustainable development goals in a guidance note from UNDG to resident coordinators/United Nations country teams on support to Governments in their implementation of the sustainable development goals. Given the emphasis that Member States place on the sharing of knowledge and experience, the Chair of UNDG will, through the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, call on the resident coordinators to capture, in their annual reports, initiatives that have used South-South cooperation as a means of implementation.

B. UNDP response to growing demand

25. UNDP, by virtue of its network of country offices and its presence in over 170 countries and territories, and given its role as manager of the resident coordinator system and the role of its Administrator as Chair of UNDG, has special responsibilities in all major United Nations frameworks for the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation, as highlighted in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the Nairobi outcome document of the 2009 High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

26. UNDP has strengthened the coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation across the United Nations system by hosting the Office, while utilizing its network of country offices to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into its programmes. UNDP defines its role in South-South cooperation as that of a trusted partner in brokering knowledge, enhancing country capacities and facilitating partnerships.

27. UNDP has also made a clear and substantial commitment in its strategic plan for 2014-2017 to utilize South-South and triangular cooperation as one of its core ways of working at the global, regional and country levels.

28. UNDP has laid out a wide range of instructional, monitoring and financial instruments for the promotion and strengthening of South-South and triangular cooperation, including South-South collaboration in the context of UNDP projects and programmes. To this end, changes in the rules governing its projects and programmes have been adopted to allow for multi-country South-South and triangular cooperation projects and partnerships, common results frameworks and cost-recovery mechanisms. In addition, a new cost-sharing template has been developed to enable its country offices to accommodate both financial and in-kind contributions for South-South and triangular cooperation, guidelines for developing country programme documents and the key parameters that country offices must consider in designing and managing programmes and projects.

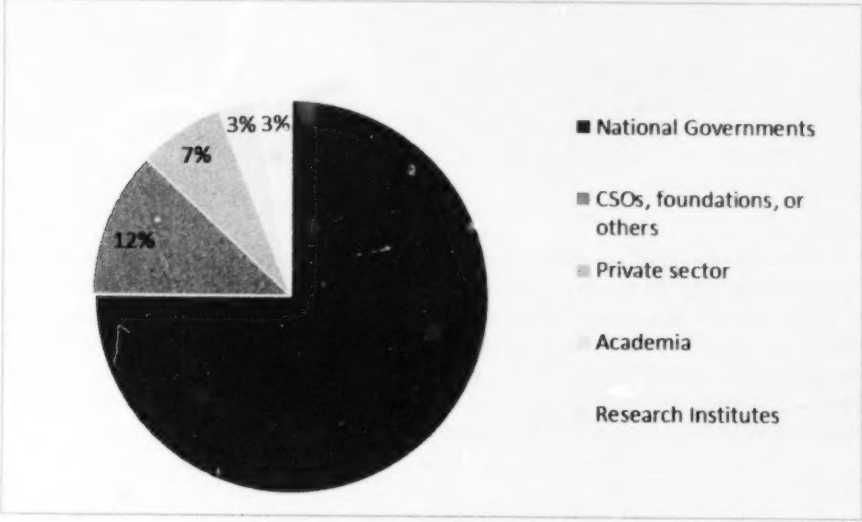
29. Moreover, the integrated results and resources framework of the UNDP strategic plan includes outputs and indicators designed to measure results in South-South and triangular cooperation. The results-oriented annual report of the Administrator to the Executive Board (June 2015) on the first year of implementation of the UNDP strategic plan has a distinct section on South-South and triangular cooperation, where key achievements are noted.

30. As a result of the above-mentioned efforts, UNDP, was able to report in 2014 that 469 projects across 133 countries had mainstreamed South-South and triangular cooperation, as against the 2013 baseline of 269 projects identified through the comprehensive mapping of UNDP-supported South-South and triangular cooperation programmes. To recognize the efforts of UNDP country offices, the Administrator of UNDP will institute the Administrator's Annual Award for Excellence in South-South Cooperation, which will be awarded to the top three country offices that have demonstrated enhanced support to South-South cooperation. The Administrator will also request the UNDP country offices to actively engage in the work of the UNDG

Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, particularly its plans to map ongoing South-South initiatives to identify best practices.[6]

31. UNDP has also enlarged its partnership base for South-South and triangular cooperation. Since 2014, national Governments have been the primary partners of UNDP in South-South and triangular cooperation (as shown in figure I), while cooperation with the private sector, civil society organizations, academia and research institutions in the South increased to 26 per cent of the total from 19 per cent in 2013. UNDP is currently exploring various institutional modalities that will enable it to further broaden its partnership base.

Figure I

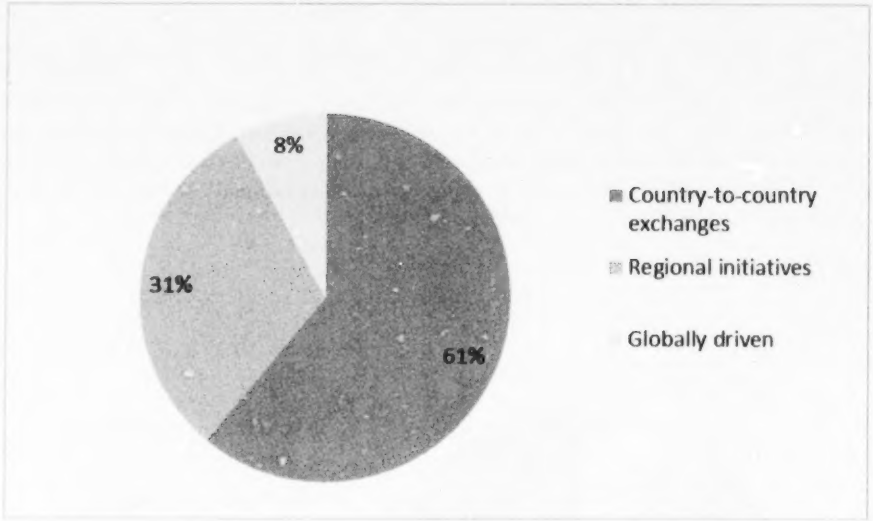


Abbreviation: CSOs, civil society organizations.

32. As shown in figure II, while most South-South cooperation projects were exchanges between two or more countries, regional initiatives experienced a 3 per cent increase, from 28 per cent in 2013 to 31 per cent in 2014. The increase was due to the prioritization of support to South-South and triangular cooperation in the five regional programmes and to enhanced regional capacities dedicated to the advancement of South-South and triangular cooperation.

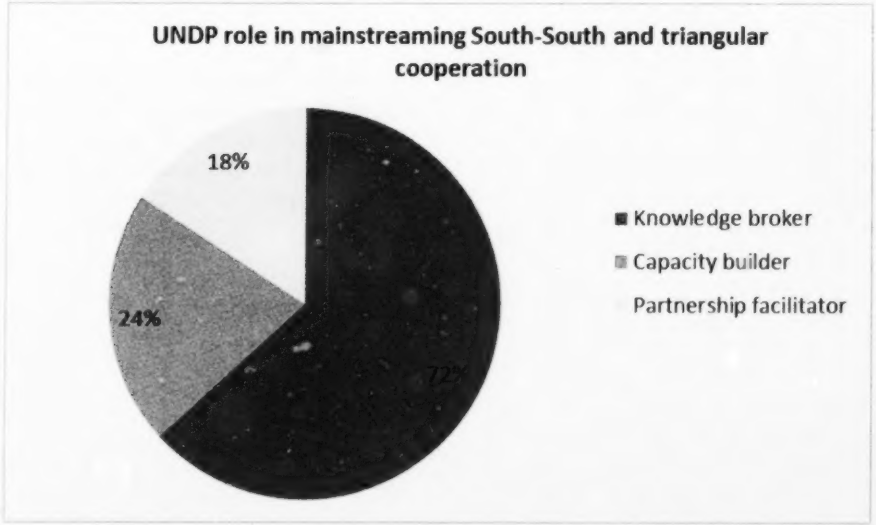
[6] In order to set up a baseline and a monitoring and reporting framework that fosters accountability, UNDP conducted a programme mapping exercise on South-South cooperation in 2014 and reviewed over 3,500 country projects to determine what, where and with whom the organization provides support to South-South cooperation, while scrutinizing what works and what does not in the process.

Figure II



33. The role of UNDP in mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation has a strong knowledge-brokering component, as can be seen in figure III. For example, in 2014, UNDP supported Indonesia in the sharing of best practices with the Philippines to aid the recovery efforts from Typhoon Haiyan. In addition, UNDP facilitated the transfer of knowledge about the Cuban Risk Reduction Management Centre model from Cuba to Jamaica, a knowledge exchange that has resulted in the establishment of a risk reduction management centre in Jamaica.

Figure III



34. Capacity-building is another way in which UNDP supports South-South and triangular cooperation. For example, UNDP assisted Mexico (the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation) in consolidating its experiences as a South-South cooperation provider. In Iraq, UNDP supported the Government in establishing a South-South cooperation unit in the Prime Minister's Advisory Commission.

35. With its recognized neutrality and its strength as a convener, UNDP facilitated important South-South and triangular partnerships in 2014. During the Ebola crisis, UNDP partnered with the Government of South Africa in deploying autoclaves in Ebola-affected countries (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) to safely dispose of medical waste. In Armenia, UNDP initiated and supported the cooperation between Armenia and Kyrgyzstan in jointly developing a disaster risk reduction strategy. UNDP worked with the Governments of China and Denmark to support energy-related activities in Ghana and Zambia under a triangular cooperation framework.

36. To build on the above-mentioned actions and progress, UNDP is developing a corporate strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation in consultation with Member States. This strategy, which is expected to be completed in 2015, is intended to break new ground in the way that the organization promotes South-South and triangular cooperation and enable it to maximize its development impact to achieve the sustainable development goals.

37. In 2013, the Executive Board of UNDP approved the strategic framework of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation for 2014-2017 and committed to allocating to the Office core resources amounting to $14.5 million for the implementation of the framework over the four-year period. In line with the Executive Board decision on the allocation of resources, UNDP has undertaken to shield the current core resources of the Office in the integrated budget despite a constrained funding environment.

38. Given that the Office aims to mobilize, during its current strategic framework, an additional $20 million to supplement regular resources, the Administrator of UNDP will take steps to call on senior UNDP leadership and UNDG principals to mobilize and/or support the Office in mobilizing additional resources and to contribute to the system-wide asset that the Office represents. On a case-by-case basis, and subject to applicable rules and procedures, the Chair of UNDG will also request the entities of the United Nations development system to make contributions to the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund.

IV. Conclusions

39. **The present report highlights the efforts of the United Nations development system, and particularly UNDP as the host agency for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, to galvanize a number of actions in response to General Assembly resolution 69/239 and subsequent related decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. It is worth noting that many of the actions and other additional measures have been taken and proposed despite a constrained financial environment for the United Nations development system, including for UNDP.**

40. **The creation of the UNDG Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation provides an opportunity to guide the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as the sustainable development goals, into national development plans and actions.**

41. **The neutrality of UNDP, its extensive network of country offices, its role as the manager of the resident coordinator system, its hosting of the Office, and the role of the Administrator as the Chair of UNDG mean that it continues to play a lead role in the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation through its policies and programmatic work across the developing world. The budget of the Office remains shielded from financial cuts despite a constrained financial environment. I reiterate the recommendation I made in my report (SSC/18/3) that "UNDP continue to serve as institutional host to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation" (*Summary*), noting that "[D]elinking the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation from UNDP would also deprive the Office of easy access to the UNDP global scale of operational support and programmatic efforts" (para. 38 (b)). UNDP has expressed its commitment to remaining as the institutional home of the Office and continuing to be the vehicle through which the Office can further offer its policy, knowledge, information and operational support to countries.**

42. **The forthcoming first UNDP corporate strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation will offer another important reference point for identifying measures that reflect and are consistent with the complementary roles of UNDP and the Office.**

43. **It is worth noting that it has been less than two years since, in 2013, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation transformed the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation into the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation by its decision 17/1. It is expected that the midterm review in 2016 of the Office's first strategic framework (2014-2017) will provide insight into the role of the Office in the post-2105 development era. Consideration can then be given to strengthening the Office through UNDP and the wider United Nations development system, bearing in mind that the midterm review of the Office will coincide with the midterm review of UNDP and other funds and programmes.**

44. **I have taken note of General Assembly resolution 69/239, in which the Assembly inter alia, requested me to appoint a special representative on South-South cooperation. After having considered various institutional, financial, operational and accountability implications, and following consultations with the Administrator of UNDP, I intend to designate the incoming Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as my Envoy on South-South Cooperation. He or she will perform that function based on his or her terms of reference as the Director of the Office.**

V. Recommendations

45. **I call on Member States to engage with the United Nations development system as the vehicle of choice for both South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation and to take advantage of available resources and institutional arrangements to enhance the two forms of cooperation. In this regard, I call on**

UNDP to continue to provide the institutional home for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, including through the shielding of the current core resources for that Office.

46. **I call on Member States to designate national institutional focal points for South-South and triangular cooperation (where they do not exist) and to connect them to the United Nations development system through the offices of the United Nations resident coordinators and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. I also call on those United Nations agencies, funds and programmes that have not yet done so to designate institutional focal points on South-South and triangular cooperation.**

47. **As the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation aims to mobilize, during its current strategic framework, an additional $20 million to supplement regular resources, I call on Member States that are in a position to do so to provide such additional resources to the Office to fulfil its United Nations system-wide mandate. In addition, I call on Member States to support efforts aimed at securing Junior Professional Officers and/or the secondment of their national officials to strengthen the Office. In this regard, I also call on UNDP to provide any required support to the Office in reaching out to Member States.**

48. **In an environment in which the core or regular budget of the United Nations system remains constrained, I encourage the formation of innovative partnerships and funding modalities between the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the United Nations development system, Governments, academic institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector in accordance with established United Nations standards.**

49. **I request the United Nations development system to support Member States by ensuring that they take every opportunity to identify the entry points in their respective national strategies for the implementation of the post-2015 agenda and to recognize South-South cooperation as a vital means of implementation with which to complement North-South cooperation.**

50. **I request the UNDG Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to facilitate the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into United Nations operational activities for development at the country and regional levels through the leveraging of the human, financial and other capacities of the United Nations development system. In this regard, I call on the United Nations development system to respond positively to efforts aimed at securing the secondment or loaning of staff to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.**

51. **I request the UNDG Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to support the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in the effective implementation of the latter's present and future strategic frameworks, with a focus on outcome-level achievements, including through support for the formulation of issue-based inter-agency programmes in the social, economic and environmental fields via UNDAFs and "Delivering as one" programmes.**

52. **I also request the UNDG Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to explore the possibility of strengthening, at the United Nations country team level, South-South cooperation thematic groups wherever they**

exist and identifying and/or supporting country teams that would benefit from the establishment of such thematic groups. Innovative approaches should be pursued to ensure, where appropriate, the enhanced participation of non-resident agencies in those thematic groups.

53. **Since there is a growing demand for a repository of experiences and lessons learned, I encourage the United Nations development system to continue investing in and capturing country and cross-regional experiences and sharing them with national partners and across the United Nations development system. Where appropriate, I further encourage the formation of communities of practice on South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation to promote knowledge-sharing, the codification of lessons and the identification of entry points for collaboration.**

54. **I encourage UNDG regional teams to catalyse South-South cooperation for the establishment and/or sustainability of economically, socially and environmentally vibrant regional and subregional neighbourhoods through the concerted provision of regional public goods.**

55. **I request the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to undertake a midterm review of its strategic framework for 2014-2017 in order to (a) review progress against agreed upon priorities, and (b) propose priorities that should be pursued to better deliver, including through improved leveraging, the complementary capacities of the organizations of the United Nations development system that are already stepping forward to advance South-South and triangular cooperation. The midterm review should also guide the design of the second strategic framework of the Office, that for 2018-2021, which should be in synergy with the value that South-South cooperation contributes to advancing the post-2015 development agenda.**

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Report on the intersessional meeting of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, 8 September 2015

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Chapter I

Decision adopted by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its intersessional meeting

1. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation adopted the following decision at its intersessional meeting on 8 September 2015:

Decision 18/IM/1

The High-level Committee,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which the Assembly endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[1]

Reaffirming also the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Nairobi from 1 to 3 December 2009, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/222 of 21 December 2009,

Recalling its decisions 18/1 and 18/2,[2]

Noting also General Assembly resolution 69/239 of 19 December 2014,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its intersessional meeting on 8 September 2015 on further mainstreaming and coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system[2] and, in this regard, noting the need to take into account the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, as well as those arising from the evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme on its contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation during the period 2008-2011,[3]

Recognizing also that the Joint Inspection Unit, in its report on South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system,[4] provides recommendations to the United Nations development system on implementing measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and taking note of the accompanying note by the Secretary-General,[5]

Noting the results of the evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme on its contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation during the period 2008-2011,[3]

Noting also that the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation in the policies and strategic frameworks of the funds, programmes

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

[2] SSC/18/IM/1.

[3] See DP/2013/31.

[4] See JIU/REP/2011/3.

[5] See A/66/717/Add.1.

and specialized agencies of the United Nations system constitutes a positive effort,

Recognizing the importance of filling the current pending appointment(s) of regional representatives of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation,

Recognizing that further deliberation by all States on the options presented in the report of the Secretary-General on the institutional placement of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation[6] will be required before a decision is made,

Acknowledging the significance of South-South and triangular cooperation, in addition to North-South cooperation, and the potential of all three modalities to positively impact the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation, particularly within the United Nations development system, including the United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation, in this context,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to present, during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, further information on the assignments and duties to be taken up by the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation deriving from his appointment as the Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation with a view to supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to implement, as appropriate, those recommendations of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit[4] and the evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme on its contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation for the period 2008-2011[3] that remain unfulfilled;

3. *Also requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to make specific recommendations on additional support that United Nations system organizations and all States could provide to South-South and triangular cooperation, which could include, inter alia, voluntary secondment of staff and appointments of junior Professional officers to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, as well as measures to strengthen the system-wide efficiency and impact of the Office;

4. *Requests* the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to align its work programme fully with its strategic framework, 2014-2017;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make necessary adjustments, as appropriate, to the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation,[7] in consultation with all States and organizations of the United Nations development system;

6. *Reaffirms* the mandate and the central role of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a

[6] See SSC/18/3 and General Assembly resolution 69/239.
[7] See SSC/17/3.

global and United Nations system-wide basis, and requests the Secretary-General, noting that further deliberation by all States on the options presented in his report on measures to further strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation[8] will be required before a decision is taken on the idea of separating the Office for South-South Cooperation as operationally autonomous from the United Nations Development Programme, to present, as part of his comprehensive report to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its nineteenth session, to be held in 2016, in consultation with all States, the Office for South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme, a comprehensive proposal on concrete ways to enhance the role of and improve the impact of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme, including in the areas of financial, human and budgetary resources, including through the potential appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, and, at the same time, recommending specific contributions of the United Nations Development Programme under such a change, with the view to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

7. *Reiterates* the request to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to establish a more formalized and strengthened inter-agency mechanism, coordinated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, with a view to encouraging joint support to South-South and triangular initiatives, as well as sharing information on development activities and results achieved by various organizations through their respective business models in support of South-South and triangular cooperation; calls upon the United Nations development system to designate representational focal points to join the mechanism; and also requests the Administrator to give the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation the opportunity to be represented more regularly in strategic and coordination mechanisms of the United Nations Development Group when matters affecting South-South and triangular cooperation are being discussed;

8. *Also notes with satisfaction* some progress made on establishing the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Task Team of the United Nations Development Group for a more formalized and strengthened inter-agency mechanism coordinated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and on designating United Nations development system focal points to join the mechanism; and further reiterates its request to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to continue to give the Office the opportunity to be represented more regularly in strategic and coordinating mechanisms of the United Nations Development Group when matters affecting South-South and triangular cooperation are being discussed;

9. *Calls upon* the United Nations Development Programme and other relevant organizations of the United Nations development system to assist developing countries in implementing projects of South-South cooperation, including sharing best practices and experiences from the South, especially

[8] See SSC/18/3.

with least developed countries, upon request and in a manner consistent with their mandates and strategic plans;

10. *Invites* the United Nations development system to encourage the transfer of technologies on mutually agreed terms for the benefit of developing countries to address poverty eradication and sustainable development;

11. *Reiterates* its request to the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on progress made in implementing the present decision to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its nineteenth session, as well as to inform the Committee of concrete steps taken to further strengthen South-South cooperation, particularly within the United Nations development system, including the strengthening of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, through improved allocation of resources.

Chapter II
High-level plenary segment

A. Opening of the meeting

2. At the opening segment of the meeting on the morning of 8 September 2015, the President of the eighteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, opened the meeting and made an introductory statement.

3. At the same opening segment, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) made a statement.

4. Also at the same segment, the Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation made a statement.

B. Introduction of the report

5. After the opening segment on 8 September 2015, the Committee considered items 2 and 3 of its agenda, on 8, 14 and 15 September. Member States reached consensus on a decision on 15 September 2015. The list of documents before the Committee at its intersessional meeting is contained in annex II to the present report.

6. The Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation introduced the report on further mainstreaming and coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (SSC/18/IM/1).

C. Discussion

7. In the context of the post-2015 development agenda and a rapidly evolving global development landscape, delegations reiterated their unwavering support for South-South and triangular cooperation and their potential to tackle the toughest development challenges, in particular poverty eradication, as outlined in the 2030 sustainable development goals, which the General Assembly was set to adopt in September 2015 at its high-level summit. They also drew attention to the importance that Member States gave to South-South, triangular and traditional North-South cooperation in the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda reached at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Busan Partnership Agreement reached at the High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011, and the partnership consensus of the First High-level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in 2014. Speaking on behalf of groups or as individual Member States or organizations, participants pointed to and welcomed the unrelenting, organic expansion of South-South and triangular initiatives throughout the world.

8. Member States and the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation also seized the occasion to commend and thank the outgoing Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and Director of the United

Nations Office for South-South Cooperation for his commitment and energy in promoting and raising the profile of South-South cooperation within the United Nations system throughout his tenure. They also welcomed the new Director due to assume office in October 2015 and expressed their confidence in his ability to lead the Office at the present critical juncture.

9. In response to the report of the Secretary-General on further mainstreaming and coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (SSC/18/IM/1), Member States across the board expressed their strong support for the leadership and coordination role of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in promoting the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation in the strategic plans and programmes of United Nations development system organizations. They highlighted the success of the Office in creating a space where Member States, United Nations system organizations, the private sector and non-governmental development actors could forge inclusive partnerships for effective development. While recognizing those successes, they urged the Office and the United Nations development system to step up their efforts to strengthen the Office and South-South cooperation overall. In that regard, one delegation drew attention to the finding in the report that in 2014, nearly 80 per cent of resident coordinators had received requests for South-South cooperation support and 20 of the 22 United Nations organizations working on South-South cooperation had confirmed its full integration into their strategic plans. It looked forward to the UNDP South-South cooperation strategy in September 2015.

10. Delegations regretted the late release of the report of the Secretary-General, however, and expressed concern that Member States had not been given sufficient time to review its contents. In that regard, a group of Member States stressed the critical importance that the group attached to South-South cooperation and urged that South-South cooperation not be marginalized in discussions in the United Nations on development. Throughout the meeting, a group of Member States, highlighting its efforts to be flexible and accommodating, appealed to colleagues to negotiate, with the final aim of reaching a consensus at the meeting, in particular on the issue of strengthening the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

11. The same group of Member States, noting the recommendations of the Secretary-General on improving United Nations system-wide governance, focus, coherence and coordination of South-South cooperation for greater development impact contained in the report (SSC/18/IM/1), stressed with concern that more should be done to make the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation fit for purpose to meet the challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that regard, the group drew attention to its previously expressed points that it had hoped the Secretary-General would address in his report, including: (a) a comprehensive proposal on how to scale up the financial, human and budgetary strength of the Office, including through the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, while specifying the UNDP contribution; and (b) a progress update on the move to establish a more formalized, strengthened inter-agency mechanism, which the Office would coordinate, to foster United Nations development system joint support for South-South and triangular cooperation, including through information- and results-sharing and lessons learned.

12. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/239, the same group reiterated its call to strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation before making a decision on whether to create an independent Office separate from UNDP. The group also sought clarification as to why the Secretary-General in his report had given preference to strengthening the Office under the auspices of UNDP and what that implied in terms of its capacity-strengthening. Other delegations, however, supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to maintain the Office under the auspices of UNDP as the most efficient and sustainable model in the long term.

13. The same group also underscored its position that South-South cooperation was a manifestation of solidarity among the peoples and countries of the South that contributed to their national well-being, national and collective self-reliance, and the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and the soon-to-be-adopted sustainable development goals. The group stressed that it was the prerogative of the countries of the South, as indicated in the Nairobi outcome document, which the General Assembly endorsed in its resolution 64/222 subsequent to the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, to set the South-South cooperation agenda, guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit. It reiterated its position that South-South cooperation was not a substitute for but rather a complement to North-South cooperation. Furthermore, it stressed that: (a) official development assistance (ODA), the major financing source for many developing countries, should target the eradication of poverty in its multiple dimensions; (b) unfulfilled ODA commitments on unfinished Millennium Development Goals should be carried forward; and (c) the impact of the ODA deficit should be assessed within the implementation review of the 2002 Monterrey Consensus from the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2001 Doha Declaration from the World Trade Organization Fourth Ministerial Conference. The group underscored the importance of respecting the policy space of national Governments and the prerogative of national Governments to set regulations on public domestic financing in line with their own objectives and needs, which should not be confused with South-South cooperation objectives.

14. Member States stressed, across the board, that the focus of the international community was to determine how best to maximize the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation and foster the appropriate enabling environment for their success in the run-up to discussion on the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and in the light of Nairobi outcome document principles. In that regard, they pointed to a number of challenges, including the need to: (a) explore real South-South cooperation flows and how financial assistance, trade and investment were redefining the international architecture of development; (b) devise effective schemes for cooperation and exchange of experiences and lessons learned; and (c) promote inclusive associations, especially with academia, local government, parliamentarians, the private sector and foundations, in South-South planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

15. There was a call to focus on mobilizing much-needed resources through a new global partnership for South-South cooperation, in line with the Istanbul Programme

of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2011, the least developed countries, in particular, required an ambitious package to meet the challenges of the sustainable development goals and their unique vulnerabilities, including clear accountability for resources promised to the core resource base of organizations that should be predictable, unearmarked and without conditionality. The emerging economies as well, given their relevant and replicable experiences, had a special role to play in assisting least developed countries to meet their sustainable development goals targets, whether to fight poverty, diseases and conflict or to tackle public-health, climate-change and food-security challenges. Globally and regionally, least developed countries would also benefit from tariff reductions and the removal of market entry barriers for the better promotion of trade. South-South partnerships could promote productive capacity-building and investments in least developed countries as a way to strengthen their inclusion in global value chains, along with strengthened technical cooperation with traditional North-South partnerships.

16. Another group of Member States, noting again the quickly evolving global development landscape and its new financing dynamics, mixed with emerging and traditional donors, pointed to the need to move beyond the traditional development paradigm. That movement required greater openness to information exchange on lessons learned from different cooperation models; better understanding of advantages, complementarities and synergies; and more targeted South-South and triangular contributions to achieving development outcomes in the areas of technical assistance, capacity-building and financing for development. Extracting and building on those lessons and successes demanded better monitoring, evaluation and reporting instruments and tools to determine which of them would make the most efficient and effective contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that regard, the group encouraged all development actors, including those engaged in South-South and triangular cooperation, to use and build on the development effectiveness principles identified in international forums, especially the 2011 Busan High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and the 2014 High-level Meeting on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. One delegation represented at the ministerial level made a presentation about the planned international exhibition or EXPO-2017 "The Future Energy", to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, to promote the development and use of green technologies in the Commonwealth of Independent States and around the world. The representatives of a number of countries expressed interest in participating in the international exhibition.

Chapter III

Adoption of the decision and the report of the Committee and closure of the meeting

17. At the closure of the meeting, on 15 September, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation adopted its decision and its report. In his closing statement, the President of the Committee requested the Rapporteur, Mario Oyarzabal (Argentina), to prepare the report of the intersessional meeting of the Committee with the support of the secretariat and to circulate the draft among Member States for their comments before finalizing it for submission to the Committee at its nineteenth session.

Chapter IV
Organizational matters

A. Date and place of the meeting

18. The Committee held its intersessional meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 8, 14 and 15 September 2015 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/239. The Committee concluded its work on 15 September rather than 8 September 2015, as previously planned, in order to allow sufficient time for negotiations.

B. Attendance

19. The intersessional meeting of the Committee was attended by representatives of States Members of the United Nations. Also in attendance were representatives of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

C. Adoption of the agenda

20. The Committee adopted the agenda of its intersessional meeting on 8 September 2015 at the start of its deliberations.

Annex I

List of participants

States Members of the United Nations

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Austria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe

Non-member States maintaining a permanent observer mission at Headquarters

State of Palestine

Intergovernmental organization having received a standing invitation to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining a permanent office at Headquarters

European Union

United Nations Secretariat and other units

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Regional Commissions New York Office

United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Volunteers programme

Annex II

List of documents

Provisional agenda of the intersessional meeting of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation (SSC/18/IM/L.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on further mainstreaming and coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (SSC/18/IM/1)